

**ONE COWSKIN.**

An Instance of German Military Thrift and Red Tapism.

An instance of military thrift and of a red tape system which is not peculiar to Germany comes from the Prussian war office. In 1866 the guards were breakfasting hurriedly. They had on the previous day fought the battle of Soor and had accomplished altogether a nine days' march. This was not the era of canned meats, and to each regiment had been allotted a certain number of cattle which had been killed, skinned and cooked, but while the men were still eating scouts came in with the news that the Austrians were near at hand.

The men got into marching order and in a few minutes were in rapid advance toward the enemy. The Grenadier guards, conspicuous always for their dispatch, hurried to such purpose that they failed to secure the skin of a cow which had been made over to them for rations.

When the official who was responsible for the value of the hide came to ask for it, it had to be reported missing. Inquiries were set on foot, evidence was collected, and a voluminous correspondence lasting fourteen or fifteen months failed to account for the skin.

There had been a cow. She had been made over to the guards. She had a hide. The hide was government property, representing a sum fixed by official tariff. The government must be credited with that sum. The hide was not forthcoming. Who should be responsible for its cash value?

It was at last decided that the colonel of the regiment should be held accountable, and a year and a half after the conclusion of the seven weeks' war he was requested by the war office to remit the sum of 3 thalers, the price of one cowskin lost by the Grenadier guards. When the sum was paid, the subject was at last officially dropped.

**COSTLY ACCIDENTS.**

A Lost Tin Mine and a Lead Mine's Bottomless Pit.

Immense plans which seemed about to be completed, but have been brought to disastrous failure at the last moment, are frequent enough in the history of industry.

London Answers tells the story of a tin mine in England which might have yielded a fortune but for a storm.

With the finding of a new vein of ore running out toward the sea a new level was driven out below the water; then it was found that the lode bent upward to near the sea bottom for mining to be safely carried on. Undiscouraged, the owner borrowed money, built a sea wall to cut off the water, erected pumps and again went to work.

On the sixth day just as an enormous mass of rich ore was being tapped a gale came up, a ship was blown upon the wall, which went to pieces at once, and the sea drove the heavy stones in upon the thin roof of the mine. In a moment the workings were hopelessly flooded, and the owner was a ruined man.

A story equally tragic is told of the Speedwell lead mine in Derbyshire. Believing that a rich vein of ore existed in a nearby hill, the owner risked his entire capital to bore a tunnel 3,000 feet long into the heart of the mountain. Suddenly the miners broke through a wall of rock into a vast hidden cavern, through which flowed a stream of water.

They began to dump rock into the stream, and after 10,000 tons a bridge began to rise out of the darkness, and then their farther progress was stopped. Month after month they toiled, and at last, after 40,000 tons in all had been cast into the cavern, they gave it up.

That narrow rift is known to this day as the Bottomless Pit.

**Yawns of Wrath.**

The singular habit of signifying anger by yawning is confined to the monkey tribe and is most marked in the baboon family, though the Gibraltar apes also indulge in it. It is probable that the gesture is originally intended to frighten an adversary by a display of teeth, just as a dog does, and that the constant wide opening of the mouth produces an involuntary yawn. In fact, if a human being keeps on opening his mouth in this way a yawn will result. If two strange baboons are put together in the same cage, they immediately confront each other and commence yawning, and if vexed or insulted by visitors they will do the same thing.

**Fat Crystals.**

If small quantities of butter, lard and beef fat be separately boiled and slowly cooled for, say, twenty-four hours, the resulting crystals will show very marked differences under the microscope. The normal butter crystal is large and globular. It polarizes brilliantly and shows a well marked St. Andrew's cross. That of lard shows a stellar form, while that of beef fat has a foliated appearance. In course of time, as the butter loses its freshness, the globular crystal degenerates and gradually merges into peculiar rosette-like forms.

**An Old Verb.**

To laze is an old verb. In Samuel Rowlands' "Martin Markall," 1610, we are told that "lozterers laze in the streets, lurke in alehouses and range in the highwaies." The word occurs, I believe, in some of Mortimer Collins' lyrics:

But Cupid lazeeth 'mongst the fairy lassies,  
Whose clere complexion he oft sweareth  
passeth.

—Notes and Queries.

Every one out of bed likes to claim occasionally that it is force of will power alone that is keeping him up.—*Atchison Globe.*

**"AS LIZA LOVED THE KING"**

By Curran R. Greenley

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The old red brick mansion stood up primly, its harsh outlines of uncompromising squareness half hidden by a riot of Guelder roses that climbed and threw long green arms of loveliness around the small diamond panes of the windows. A straight gate bordered path led down to the gate through an avenue of beeches where the sunlight fell in lance rifts down upon the blue grass fresh with the green of May—Maytime in old Kentucky in the year of our Lord 1833. Beyond the rustic gate a broad, white road ran from east to west.

Those were strange processions that wound along the great highroad, the artery of trade from the east over the Alleghenies to Kentucky and the southern country that lay beyond in the gateway of the wilderness—long trains of white covered wagons filled with a medley of women, children, household goods, with their escorts of stalwart men on horseback. Already the begin to the west had commenced, often a tribe of Choctaws bound for the wigwam of the great father, grim, dusk faces under nodding plumes, animated bundles, with smaller bundles bound to their backs, astride of the ponies, silent as ghosts, and passing, always passing, up the long white road.

Twice each day, with the long tannara-ra of the bugles and the rattle of whip and hoof, came the stagecoach, a flash of color from east to west, and again the quiet of earth and sky.

Over the hills, whose dim, blue line encompassed her world around, the child's heart went each day with the dying echo of hoof and bugle; over the hills, where the gold lights of sunset kissed the pink limestone cliffs, brightening to emerald green the tufts of maidenhair in the deep clefts, and farther up, where the mists caught and held them, deepening into the evening's violet crown.

A slim, shy maid of barely fifteen, in her long, narrow skirt and prim kerchief drawn tightly across the childish breast, the small brown hand shading her level brows, she watched with wistful eyes up the long ribbon of road—little Anne, with her peach blossom face and soft gray eyes that had dared to look from under their long black lashes at a face that was the face of a people's hero; not all the people, for here in her father's house Anne had heard fierce denunciations and even curses against that name. But when had politics ought to do with a maid's romancing? Deep down in her heart the girl cherished the memory of one summer evening, when all alone the great man reined in his horse and sprang from the saddle to walk and talk with a pretty child. Two years had come and gone, but over the low gate Anne leaned and dreamed of her hero as did that Lisa in faroff Italy of her king.

The evening shadows grew longer and the sun vanished behind the hills as the tinkle of bells chimed up from the pasture. With eyes still dream thrilled Anne wandered out and across the road to where the spring bubbled up from its mossy pool. A little rustic summer house sheltered it, and the little stream lost itself in a dense thicket of hazel bushes that grew close up to the arbor. The girl's light foot made no sound as she entered and dropped down upon the seat. Voices close at hand aroused her as a low murmur came from the hazel copse.

"The best place is where the road comes through Hungerford's woods, this side of the mill."

Then another voice: "I don't like it. It's doing all the dirty work and getting the kicks for pay. Let them as wants him out of the way put him there."

And the first voice answered with an oath: "What's that to you? The men that wants Andrew Jackson dead hain't the men as risks nuthin'."

"Andrew Jackson," Anne's heart gave a great bound, then almost stopped, as there was a rustle among the bushes. She strained her ears to catch the last words.

"He'll likely spend tonight at Hungerford's, leaving there by daybreak."

"No. There hain't but one nigger along. He don't like comp'ny a-travelin'." And the low chuckle died in the distance.

It was nearly dark as Anne crept out from her hiding place and glanced fearfully up the long white road. She knew that Hungerford's lay fifteen miles away as the crow flies, and to reach it would mean a ride through the night—morning would be too late; knew too, poor child, that in the hearts of those about her dwelt the bitterest hatred of the man that she would have risked her life to save! Not that they would have lifted a hand against his life, but they would have laughed her story down and bade her hush, as children should.

Alone in her little white curtained room she knelt and prayed her simple prayer. She had always been afraid of the dark—the dark that was like whispering lips in your ear and the touch of soft fingers clutching at your gown—but the life of her hero was the high guerdon of the deed.

One by one each door was closed. She heard her father's chair pushed back and knew that he was laying his pipe on the mantelshelf, heard her mother setting the house in order, and then it all grew still. The tall clock ticked louder and louder through the dark with an accusing voice—ten eleven, twelve, and at the last stroke a little dark figure hurried across the yard to the stable, where Harry Clay, the

bay gelding, whinnied softly in his loose box. He knew the little fingers that slipped the bit between his velvet lips, and he hid his handsome head against her curls in mute caress as the saddle was girthed. Harry Clay had never carried that weight before, and when the flapping riding skirt struck his withers the blue ears lay close as he reared and pawed the air, with the thin nostrils flared, but a whisper, a touch upon the mane, and he dropped into a light canter along the footpath, his feet making no sound upon the turf.

Fifteen miles to Hungerford's, and four hours yet until the dawn. Harry Clay quickens his stride as a clock from a farmhouse chimes out, "One, two," and they have passed the brick church at the forks of Otter creek, where she had knelt so often at her mother's side. "Three," and the white road runs backward under the flying hoofs. The moments speed, and they gallop into the shadow of Hungerford's woods. A dim old moon was shining, and a break in the trees let in the light full on the girl's face. There was a rustle in the shadows of the roadside, and the same rough voice cried out: "That girl of Montague's on the bay colt—stop her! Whoa, there!"

But Anne brought the whip down on Harry Clay's flank. Not quite swift enough, for a pistol shot rang out, another and yet another, and she felt a dull shock as Harry Clay, maddened by the reports and the insult of a blow, tore down the white stones of the road, the fire flashing under the iron shod hoofs—on and on, while the miles rolled back in the dark and the gray of dawn came over the hills. There was something warm and wet that trickled down the great bay's shoulder as the little figure averted and clung to the saddle. As the gold broke along the east a horseman rode out of the woods in the opposite direction, the same that had walked his horse and talked with the pretty child two years ago.

The reins dropped on Harry Clay's neck as Andrew Jackson rode alongside just in time to catch her as she reeled from the saddle, and then, with her head against his heart, the little maid sobbed out her story, while the sweet face grew paler and the wild roses died from the pretty cheeks as the drip, drip of the blood went pattering down.

The grim, dark face hardened into steel as he beckoned to the negro that rode a little behind him.

"Go back to the farm and tell them to make ready, and, mind you, lose no time in sending for the doctor." Very carefully and slowly he rode, bearing the light weight, while the still face lay against his breast, smiling dreamily.

At the farmhouse all was bustle and stir. Mistress Hungerford's capable hands laved the wounds and made all sweet and clean in the chamber where they carried her to await the coming of the doctor.

Very quiet and still she lay when he came to bid her farewell. His face was sad and stern when he bared his head by the low white bed where Anne lay. They two were alone when Anne opened her great gray eyes on the face of her dreams, and in that look he whose heart lay buried in a woman's grave in Tennessee read the old story sanctified in the white shrine of the maiden soul; read also, with a soldier's unerring knowledge, the whiteness about the pretty mouth. The stern face grew tender and the eagle eyes were dimmed as he leaned to that unspoken prayer, laying his lips upon the white ones beneath, that quivered a moment and were still.

The child's eyes looked beyond the hills at last.

**Two Kinds of Dreariness.**

You hear often from car window observers of the "dreary" desert, the "hopeless," the "cheerless" desert, but the desert deserves none of these adjectives. It is dreadful, if you wish, in the way in which it punishes the ignorance and presumption of those who know not the signs of thirst; it sometimes is awful in its passions of dust, torments, heat; it is even monotonous to those who love only the life of crowded cities—but it is never dreary or cheerless. Hopelessness may well apply to the deserts of Mulberry street and Smoky hollow, with their choked and heated tenements, their foul odors, their swarms of crowded and hideous human life, but the desert of the arid land is eternally hopeful, smiling, strong, rejoicing in itself. The desert is never morbid in its adversity. On the other hand, it is calm and sweet and clean—the cleanest of all land. Not till man comes, bringing his ugly mining towns and his destructive herds, does it bear even the vestige of the unclean, the dreary, the unpicturesque.—Ray Stannard Baker in Century ("The Great Southwest").

**Round Pegs in Square Holes.**

A great deal of misdirected effort in this blundering world is due to the fact that people are compelled to engage in work which they dislike, when just around the corner, so to speak, is work which they might love. Ambitious parents decree that the lad who would make a painter, whose eye for color and form is true or whose soul responds and fingers thrill to the vibrating chords of melody, shall instead enter a counting room and be apprenticed to a business for which he has no aptitude.

Similarly, a boy who would succeed in farming or in the carpenter's shop is destined to a liberal profession and compelled to undergo a long course of training for this, which, owing to his lack of fitness, is almost abortive in its results. Half the failures and defeats in life may be attributed to the plucking of the round peg in the square hole. Men and women are forced to work at that which they dislike and which does not enlist their highest powers.—Harper's Bazar.

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